NOTE IV.

LIASIS PETERSII. N. SP.

BY

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In the August number of the »Monatsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin", for 1876, p. 533, Prof. Peters notices a specimen of what he calls: *Liasis amethystinus*, var. *timoriensis*, which was brought from Timor by the German man-of-war »Gazelle" on her cruise in the Indian and Australian seas. On the accompany ing plate he gives figures of the head and anal region of this species, together with corresponding drawings taken from a true *Liasis amethystinus.*

The above mentioned figures look different in many respects and I was surprised to find in our museum a snake, hitherto undescribed, which corresponds, as far as the configuration of the scales on its head goes, with Prof. Peters' socalled Timorese variety of *Liasis amethystinus.*

I cannot find the slightest difference between Prof. Peters' figure and our specimen; even the black line advancing from the nape of the neck till between the parietals in fig 3a might pass for the exact reproduction of the corresponding line in the specimen from Flores.

But then a closer inspection immediately enforces the conviction that this animal can never be a *Liasis ame-*

thystinus, nor even a variety of it. A series of specimens of the last-named species, which I own to be widely spread and subject to considerable variation is now before me, together with the Flores specimen, and I do not hesitate in regarding the latter, with its greater number of scales, each of them so much smaller, as a distinct species for which I propose the name of

Liasis Petersii.

The configuration of the scales on its head need not be entered upon more fully, after the very good figure mentioned above, which Peters has given of it. The four prefrontals in one row, as well as the considerably reduced number of frenals are perhaps the characters which most strike the observer at first sight. The parietals appear to be less developed than they are in *Liasis amethystinus*.

The number of ventral shields is 288, whereas Dumeril et Bibron give 303 to 316 for *L. amethystinus*, numbers with which those of all our specimens of the last-named species correspond. I cannot decide whether this diminution number in applies to the caudal shields as well, the specimen under examination having lost its tail which was beginning to cicatrize and be restored when the animal was captured and killed.

A still greater difference lies, as noted above, in the number and size of the scales on the body, which becomes exceedingly evident on comparing two specimens of about equal dimensions.

The number of longitudinal rows of scales in *Liasis Petersii* is about 56 near the head, 60 in the middle of the body, and 43 towards the tail. On specimens of *L. amethystinus* of the same average size, I counted in the corresponding body regions 45, 47 and 28 rows of scales. The difference in size is most striking just behind the head, along the neck and the upper parts of the back.

Although the ground colour of the animal (in spirits) does not seem to differ greatly from that of *L. amethys-*

tinus, the black markings along the back do. They resemble much more the pattern as it is found in *Python reticulatus* and *bivittatus*; a network of patches of darker scales distributed among others of a lighter colour. The rings encircling the hinder part of the body and tail in *L. amethystinus* of which I never missed the traces either in old or in young examples are wanting in *Liasis Petersii*.

Our specimen was collected by Dr. Semmelink at Larantoeka on the E. coast of Flores; the Berlin one came from Kupang, Timor. Explorations of the neighbouring islands must decide how far its geographical range extends.